

MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the CU Denver Downtown Campus Faculty Assembly's
Budget Priorities Committee
Tuesday, December 15, 2020
held via Zoom
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

Present: Diana White (chair), Keith Guzik (minutes), Quintin Gonzalez, Todd Ely, Katherine Gunny, Heather Johnson, Todd Haggerty, Hani Mansour, Kelly McCusker, Roderick Nairn, Mike Radenkovic, Jody Beck, Jennifer Sobanet

Chancellor Marks.

12:30 – 1:00

Chancellor Marks visited. The committee introduced itself and shared concerns about the current financial situation, innovation, the identity of the campus, and the plan to cut tenured faculty at Boulder.

The chancellor's remarks.

- The pandemic disrupted what was expected to be a stronger financial situation for the university. She is confident that the university is positioned well going forward. A shared vision of where we're headed is needed. The process of defining a strategic plan in the Spring will help in that regard.
- Regarding our relationship with Anschutz: We have joint accreditation, and the community feels positive about consolidation. The hope is to find ways to strengthen our strategic relationship, and research is one area where we can strengthen ties. There are also opportunities in education. We will still have shared services, which can lead to some frustration. That needs to be simplified.
- Regarding growing academic programs: The budget model gives academic units more power to invest. If there are opportunities for academic growth, we need to work together to support that. We can do more fund-raising as well. A 2030 plan would help with that—it would not only align strategies for units, but it be taken to donors as well.
- Regarding public-private partnerships: CU Denver is at the front end of where it can be with fundraising. We have younger alumni, but we need to strengthen the culture around alumni relations. We need to create a capital campaign. And that is tied to the strategic plan, which advancement can use in the campaign. For PPP, we need to have a process in place to make sure that partnership is supportive of the faculty members and institution.
- Regarding faculty involvement in budget processes: The budget model adoption and furlough processes seemed to have a good amount of faculty involvement, and that involvement helped influence outcomes.

Debriefing.

1:00 – 1:10

Following the chancellor's visit, the committee debriefed. Among the points raised:

- Committee members are happy to hear about fundraising, given our continuing structural deficit and need to find new revenue streams.
- More systemic funds to support research would be helpful. Grants alone cannot cover costs for PhD students, and we end up turning students away because we do not fund out of state tuition.
- Expanding programs and partnerships requires care to make sure it benefits the campus as a whole.
- The chancellor was responsive to faculty feedback on the need to pause a planned search for an executive director for online education. The chancellor welcomed the feedback and will wait until there is a new provost. This speaks well to faculty involvement in general.

Budget Office updates

1:20-1:40

- There are discussions to have Barnes and Noble run the bookstore. Any transition would come mid to late Spring.
- AHEC is facing a lot of challenges in its budget, especially with parking revenue down.
- Hopefully, a new deal with RTD can be reached to reinstate the EcoPass or something like it for the Spring.
- We are down 5% on Spring compared to last year. It's still early, but it's a concern. We are trying to make sure that students who step out for Spring come back in the fall.
- The conversation on subvention is likely to take place in January-February.

ODE

1:40-2:00

Negotiations on the new master services agreement are ongoing. There are terms sheets for various programs. A campus-wide strategy is needed. Some programs will have a full partnership with them, working on a 55-45 tuition split—these programs will get comprehensive support, including marketing, academic support services, navigators to help students enroll, and full instructional design. Tobin and Diana White are the campus liaisons on this. Graduate programs will be D2. For undergraduate, ODE is envisioning small (~150 new students per year), medium (~225 new students per year), large (~300 new students per year), and extra large (~400 new students per year) programs. Negotiations are ongoing to provide foundational support across campus to other programs.